

Message Text

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1399

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UNCLAS BELFAST 298

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, UK, EI

SUBJECT: SECURITY: PARTISAN REACTIONS TO ANTI-TERRORIST MOVES
IN REPUBLIC

1. NEWS THAT GOVERNMENT IRISH REPUBLIC WOULD PROPOSE TOUGH NEW PACKAGE OF LAWS GREETED FAVORABLY BY UNIONISTS AND ALLIANCE PARTY IN NORTHERN IRELAND. EARLY COMMENTATORS INCLUDE UNIONIST MP JAMES MOLYNEAUX, ALLIANCE LEADER OLIVER NAPIER, OFFICIAL UNIONIST LEADER HARRY WEST AND MICHAEL LONG, SPOKESMAN ON SECURITY FOR UNIONIST PARTY NORTHERN IRELAND. LONG DESCRIBED PROPOSALS AS "DRAMATIC" BUT POINTED OUT MANY MEASURES TO BE INTRODUCED IN DAIL WERE ALREADY IN OPERATION IN NORTHERN IRELAND. HARRY WEST EXPRESSED HOPE BRITISH GOVERNMENT WOULD NOW FOLLOW LEAD OF REPUBLIC FOR TOUGHER SECURITY MEASURES AND EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS THAT IRISH COURTS WOULD APPLY NEW LAWS AS EFFECTIVELY AS THEY MIGHT. VANGUARD PARTY CHARGED PRESENT U.K. GOVERNMENT WITH LACKING "WILL" TO ENFORCE LAWS. NEWS THAT IRISH POLICE CONTINUING TO ARREST PEOPLE, INCLUDING JOE CAHILL, FOR TAKING PART IN PROVISIONAL SINN FEIN MARCH ON ANNIVERSARY EASTER RISING ALSO PROMINENTLY FEATURED IN NORTH.

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2. BOTH WINGS OF SINN FEIN HAVE CONDEMNED IRISH GOVERNMENT

PROPOSALS. ONE CHARGE WAS THAT THEY "DICTATORIAL".

3. SECSTATE MERLYN REES EARLIER HAD AGAIN STRESSED HIS BELIEF ANTI-TERRORIST LAWS IN NORTHERN IRELAND WERE ADEQUATE. THIS TIME HE REPLYING TO PROPOSALS FOR TOUGHER LAWS MADE BY MR. PHILIPS GOODHART, MP. MR. REES SAID LEGISLATION UNDER CONTINUING REVIEW AND SUPPORTED CHIEF CONSTABLE NEWMAN'S VIEW THAT THE WAY FORWARD IS BY THE PERSISTENT, IMPARTIAL AND PROFESSIONAL ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAWS.

4. ONE SOLDIER WOUNDED IN BELFAST AND THERE ATTACK ON ARMY PATROL IN LONDONDERRY BY GUNMEN AUGUST 23. ELECTRICAL STORE EMPLOYING FIFTEEN PEOPLE DESTROYED BY BOMB AUGUST 23. COMMAND STAFF OFFICIAL IRA SOUTH DOWN/SOUTH ARMAGH HAS CLAIMED RESPONSIBILITY FOR SEVEN ACTIONS AGAINST THE THIRD PARACHUTE REGIMENT IN THE NEWRY AREA DURING THE PAST THREE MONTHS. OFFICIAL IRA STRESSED CEASEFIRE DECLARED MAY 1972 CONTINUED BUT THAT OPERATIONS WERE CARRIED OUT BECAUSE OF "INCESSANT AND VICIOUS ATTACKS CARRIED OUT BY THE PARATROOPERS ON THE CIVILIAN POPULATION IN THE AREA."

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